

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Administrative Office	(2) MEETING DATE 1/6/2015	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Lisa Howe/781-5011	
(4) SUBJECT Thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for the Board's review of the continuing need for the March 11, 2014 proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board receive the thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) N/A	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(9) BUDGETED? N/A
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. ____) <input type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. ____)			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5 Vote Required <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP N/A	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No	(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Date: <u>3/11/14, 4/8/14, 5/6/14, 6/3/14, 6/17/14, 7/15/14, 8/12/14, 9/9/14, 10/7/14, 11/4/14, 12/2/14, and 12/16/14</u>	
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW Guy Savage			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts			

County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Administrative Office / Lisa Howe/781-5011

DATE: 1/6/2015

SUBJECT: Thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for the Board's review of the continuing need for the March 11, 2014 proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board receive the thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.

DISCUSSION

Background

On March 11, 2014, the Board adopted a resolution proclaiming a local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County. Section 8630 of the California Government Code and County Code Chapter 2.80.070 (2) require that the Board of Supervisors review the need for continuing the local emergency at least every 30 days until such emergency is terminated. The Board also directed staff to return every 30 days to provide an update on the status of actions by the Drought Task Force, including a report on the analysis regarding local water conditions, local responses, conservation and outreach projects, and the State Water Project.

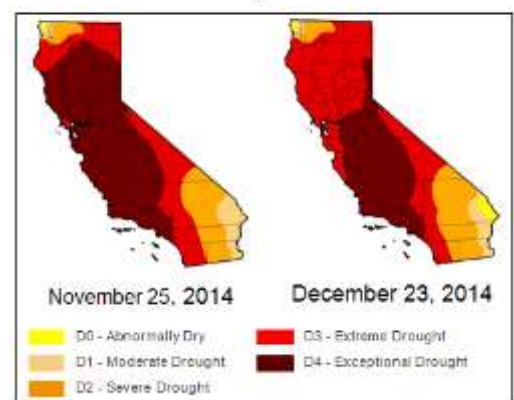
The last drought update was on December 16, 2014. This is the twelfth update since the proclamation of a local emergency on March 11, 2014. This month's drought update is on the consent agenda as drought conditions remain relatively unchanged and there were no major actions requiring further discussion that have occurred since the last update.

The Drought Task Force continues to meet regularly to coordinate drought monitoring, impact assessments, responses to emergency health and safety, and public communication and outreach. The task force prepared the Monthly Drought Update (Attachment 1) to inform the Board on current drought conditions and related management actions. Current drought conditions confirm the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency.

Current Conditions

Recent storms have improved California water conditions; however, much of the state remains in a severe drought. The latest U.S. Drought Monitor report released December 24, 2014 indicates San Luis Obispo County remains at the D4 – Exceptional Drought intensity rating (Attachment 2). Approximately 94% of California is at a level D2 Severe Drought or worse with 32% of the state at a D4 intensity level. Due to recent rainfall throughout the state, the percentage of the state in a D4 intensity level fell from 55% since the last update. Figure 1 shows how the percentages of intensity levels have changed over the past month.

Figure 1
U.S. Drought Monitor



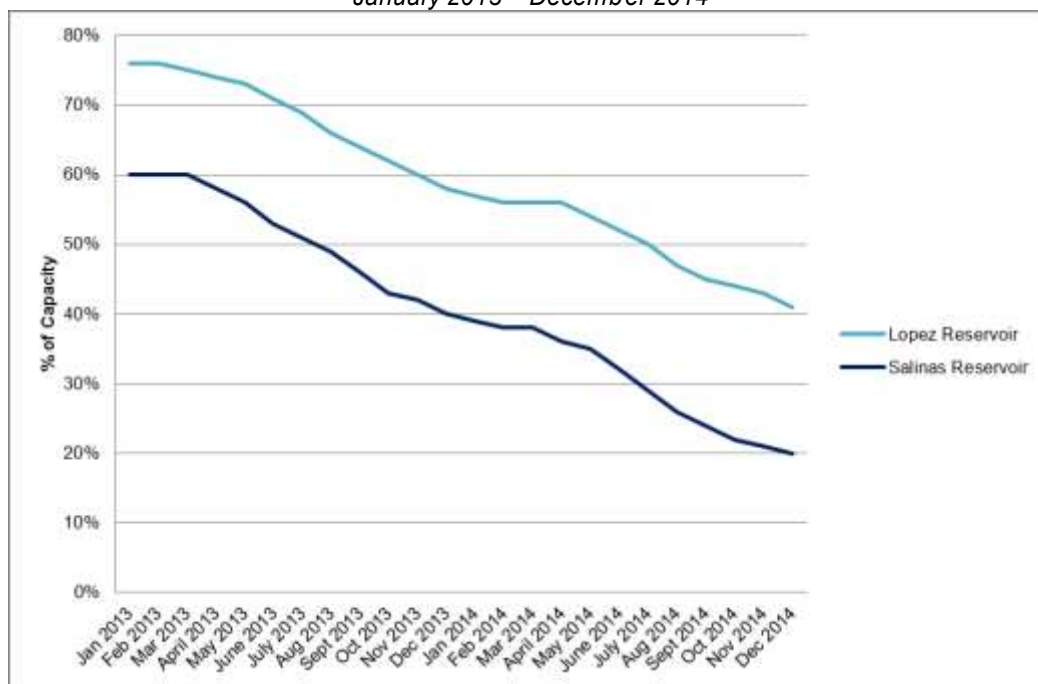
County rainfall totals for the 2014-15 water year (July 2014 – June 2015) range from 27-45% of average annual rainfall totals. See Attachment 3 for additional information. Reservoir levels remain significantly lower than the average percentage capacity for this time of year including: Nacimiento 22% (81,695 acre feet); Whale Rock 46% (17,815 acre feet); Lopez 41% (20,486 acre feet); and Salinas 20% (4,790 acre feet) of capacity (Attachment 4).

Winter Outlook

Forecasts from the National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center (CPC) indicate uncertainty about continued wet conditions. The Center's new January, February, and March seasonal precipitation outlook predicts that there is a 33-39% probability in extreme Northern California and a 40-49% probability that the remainder of California could experience above average precipitation. The trend for above average temperatures (50-59% probability) for California also looks to continue which would translate into less accumulated snowpack in the mid-elevations of the Sierra.

California, the central coast in particular, remains the driest region in the western half of the U.S. over the past 3 years. Figure 2 below helps to illustrate the impacts on reservoir levels over the last 2 years. It would take several months of well above normal precipitation to erase the precipitation deficit which has accrued during the last 3 years. The severe drought is unlikely to abate much in the long term.

Figure 2
Reservoir Conditions - Percentage of Capacity
January 2013 – December 2014



Source: www.slocountywater.org

Note: Historical data for Nacimiento and Whale Rock was not readily available.

Impacts

Agricultural Conditions

Recent rainfall across the county and relatively warm temperatures has resulted in germination of certain forage plants and a visible green tint to our hillside rangeland areas. Current rangeland conditions are improved over the same time as last year. Early rains have helped moisten soil but so far, the total quantity has not been enough to refill the soil profile or leach salt, which has accumulated in many areas of the county. Growing conditions will improve if we continue to receive above-average rainfall for the rest of the winter.

Fire Conditions

Recent rains and cooler temperatures have lowered the current threat of wildfires across much of the state. CAL FIRE announced the transition out of fire season beginning December 15. While rainfall totals in December are predicted to be higher than normal, it will take more storms with heavy rain to give the larger vegetation the time to absorb the water and

raise their fuel moisture levels. Until that happens, even with the recent rain, the vegetation can easily dry back out during extended periods of warm weather.

Domestic Wells

The Governor's Drought Task Force created an online intake form for use by local, state, or tribal and federal agencies to document domestic water issues. Data collected is considered confidential and access is restricted. Individuals with domestic water issues are encouraged to contact County Environmental Health at (805) 781-5544.

In addition, the County Drought Task Force created a supplemental anonymous survey. The survey does not ask for any identifying information and is intended to support our request for federal disaster assistance for individuals. Individuals who wish to remain anonymous are encouraged to complete the supplemental survey online at www.slocounty.ca.gov/admin/Drought_Update or by phone by calling (805) 781-5011.

To date, the County has received 77 responses to the supplemental survey. Of the 77 respondents, 33% report that one or more wells have gone dry and 11% report they are trucking in water. It is important to note that the survey is voluntary and as a result, responses are not representative of the county population.

Economic Conditions

Negative economic impacts continue to mount due to drought conditions. The San Luis Obispo County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) continues to gather information on local drought-related job impacts. The WIB's Drought Business Impact survey is available at <http://sloworkforce.com/drought-survey/>. Though the WIB is hearing that there are impacts, the County does not have any "reportable" impacts due to the State's requirements for reporting (i.e. specific business name, address, etc.).

The County continues to identify assistance programs to help rural communities, businesses and individuals impacted by California's ongoing drought conditions. Information regarding drought assistance for rural homeowners has been placed on the County Drought Conditions and Water Conservation webpage. Rural Development, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), delivers a number of programs to help rural communities, businesses and individuals impacted by California's ongoing drought conditions.

Conservation Efforts

County Facilities and Parks Usage

General Services continues to lead water conservation efforts at county facilities. Since the last update, staff repaired two deteriorated water lines at County facilities. In addition, with the rainfall received and cooler temperatures staff has continued to reduce/eliminate watering and on landscape and sports fields.

Emergency Actions

The proclamation continues to provide authority for unforeseen needed actions. As also noted, proclamation provides a statement to State and Federal agencies of the seriousness of the County's situation.

The County has taken no new emergency actions specific to the drought in this reporting period.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board review and receive the attached update. The update highlights the existence of continuing drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County. Review of this update by the Board fulfills the Board's duty to review the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency due to the existence of drought conditions pursuant to Government Code section 8630. No other Board action is necessary.

Note: Any regulations issued because of the local drought emergency would be subject to Board approval. The local emergency proclamation adopted by the Board on March 11, 2014, will remain in effect until terminated by your Board.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

At the onset of the Governor's declaration and under the direction of the County Administrative Officer, a County Drought Task Force was formed. The Drought Task Force is comprised of multiple County departments, including: the Administrative Office, Office of Emergency Services, Public Works Department, General Services, County Parks, County Fire (CAL FIRE), Agricultural Commissioner, Planning and Building, Farm Advisor, Health Agency, and County Counsel. All member departments provided input for this report.

County OES continues to be in in regular contact with Cal OES to receive and provide situation status information.

The Public Works Department continues to coordinate with local water purveyors and cities.

Public Health is coordinating with relevant State agencies, including the State California Department of Public Health and Emergency Medical Services Authority Health Coordination Center.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The long-term financial impact on the local economy, including the demand on County and other legal agency services, cannot be forecast at this time. The County continues to track drought-related costs. As of November 19, 2014, tracked labor costs associated with the drought total \$296,534.

RESULTS

Accepting the update prepared by the Drought Task Force, which establishes the existence of conditions of drought, confirms the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency. Maintaining the proclamation of local emergency will continue to allow for the Public Works Department and other agencies to take immediate actions needed by allowing temporary reduction of certain regulatory and purchasing requirements. This will also permit County staff to assist in drought-related work and tasks outside their normal scope of duties in the capacity of Disaster Service Workers under Government Code section 3100. In addition, acceptance of the update from the Drought Task Force confirms the continuing existence of severe drought conditions and will also serve as notice to the State of our dire conditions and a reminder to all of the serious drought conditions facing the County and State.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1-Monthly Drought Update 1-6-15
2. Attachment 2-U.S. Drought Monitor Map
3. Attachment 3-Rainfall and Reservoir Data
4. Attachment 4-Local Reservoir Conditions